



# HUMANIZATION OF POLITICAL RHETORIC IN NAYANTARA SAHGAL'S NOVELS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO A TIME TO BE HAPPY AND RICH LIKE US

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## ABSTRACT

Among the women novelists in the Indo-Anglian literary scene Nayantara Sahgal occupies a distinct place. Her novels reflect the changing patterns and human values through the aspirations and conflicts of her characters. Sahgal has been chiefly hailed as a political novelist but there are other important aspects to her novels. The chief concern of this paper is the humanization of political rhetoric in Nayantara Sahgal's novels with special reference to her novels *A Time to be Happy and Rich Like Us*.

In her attempt to humanize the political rhetoric, Nayantara Sahgal has employed various modes of Projection. Politics in the novel has to integrated with the patterns of life traced. Thus politics in Sahgal's novels is Presented through the medium of living men and women and their actions. Ms. Sahgal has also used psychology to engraft her humanitarian concerns on an essentially political framework. The political theme of the attainment of freedom is linked with the women's search for freedom in the personal realm. The most crucial aspect of freedom Sahgal's protagonists valiantly strive for is freedom from an orthodox, outdated view of Hinduism. Sahgal relates the political ills the nation is afflicted with to a lop-sided interpretation of Hinduism. We can also see that Nayantara Sahgal's Protagonists invariably use a Gandhian idiom in espousing their humanitarian commitment. Politics rather becomes the external manifestation of internal issue. Ms. Sahgal has succeeded in linking the personal and political not only by showing the same forces at work in the two realms but also by presenting the political as the extension of the personal.

**KEYWORDS:** Humanization, Rhetoric, Politics, Psychology

## INTRODUCTION

All the literatures of the world are the outputs of the human feelings of the creative writers. Indian English literature is not essentially different in kind from the other literatures of the world. Human feelings, ideas, passions, experiences, joys, sorrows, aspirations and struggles in life form the core of all literary works.

Indian English literature took its birth in the dawn when India was brought under the British control. A Journey into the past of Indian novel reveals the pre-occupations of the novelists with the segments of history and historical events, like the Gandhian movements for freedom, partition, creation of Bangladesh, trauma of riots. Nayantara Sahgal occupies a distinct place in the Indo- Anflian kiterary scence not only as a novelist but also as a political commentator. She has published nine words and eight works of non- fiction

Born into the 'First Family' of Indian politics- the Nehrus Sahgal Saw at first hand India's emergence as an independent nation under the prime minister ship of the maternal uncle, Jawaharlal Nehru and her cousin Indira Gandhi's rise to power of the country's first woman prime minister. Through her works, Sahgal portrays the political happenings and environment of the newly independent India, the changing face of bureaucracy the shifting value structuers and loyalty.

Her novels reflect the changing patterns and human rules through the aspirations and conflicts of her characters. Her

novels present the variegated picture of Indian Woman hood. Sahgal has been chiefly hailed as a political novelist but there are other important aspects to her novels. In her novels there is a perfect juxtaposition of two worlds - the impersonal world of politics and the personal world of man-woman relationship. The political scenario in her novels has been presented in eminently human rather than in ideological colours. The long drawn out fight for freedom, the high hopes at the attainment of Independence, the mushrooming of opportunists and ideologies, the rise of fissiparous forces tearing at the national fabric, the rise of pseudo-Radicalism. apathy, unconcern and rank self-seeking, pushing the nation to a point of extremity, the edifice of egalitarian democracy reeling under the unscrupulous Emergency-regime the tortorous course taken by the country in recent years comes alive in essentially human terms. She 'humanizes' politics by making politicians swayed by human considerations. Politics in her novels is just the external manifestation of internal compulsions. Ms. Sahgal has used psychology to engraft her

humanitarian concerns on an essentially political frame work. Sahgal makes her fictional universe throb with beings of flesh-and- blood rather than abstracted ideologies. Her characters present their constructive political ideology in an essentially human idiom. Nayantara Sahgal's achievement consists in attempting a portrayal of politicians in personal relationships instead of giving the usual run- of-the-mill stuff of the political aspirations of non-political entitles. Her politicians exist in both the public and the private realms.

Nayantara Sahgal highlights the umbilical link between the political and the personal in another way, too. In her novels the political and the personal are brought together by the device of juxtaposition. There is a tension in all her work between two oppositional discourses - one of humanism which calls for consideration, compassion and reaching out to others and the other of power which is spurred in by an aggressive ruthlessness in pursuit of its goals. This tension functions also at level of cultural encounters, which are placed within hegemonic structures. There is no clear-cut demarcation between 'them' and 'us' but an on-going critiquing of all freedom-denying institutions, roles or codes of behaviors.

Humanism in modern times connote thinking based on human experience and reason, based on values in the form of human nature and culture. The human being is a political being but the forces which mould human character are categories like religion, culture, upbringing, power and experience. Those a fighting as for instance the for example orphans and refugees even when they pursue positive policies they tend to stick on to human concerns, All religions share a basic faith in human values and the primary aim of these moral is directed towards goodness. But in practice the stress on religious identity-creates barriers, leads to intolerance, hatred and division and the closing-in of the mind.

One of the most important contributions of Nayantara Sahgal is her integration of the personal, the political and the religious into the psychological reality of man's mind and its ways of working. She finds the mechanism of popular Hinduism as the root cause of most forms-of exploitation at the personal and the political level Hinduism thus Probed, brings together the personal and the political like nothing else the common malaise in the two realms.

Nayantara Sahgal shows signs of gradual maturity as a political novelist expertly interlocking her humanitarian and political concerns into an amalgam where each realm adds to the solutions to the problems in one are often to be found in the other. Politics rather become the external manifestation of the internal issue, the microcosmic and the macrocosmic don't merely run parallel they rather become the other side of each other and meet, an like parallel lines, not at infinity but here and now. The political and the personal themes do not merely run parallel to each other. Ms Sahgal has succeeded in linking the personal and the political not only by showing the same forces at work in the two realms but also by presenting the political as the extension of the personal. The political novel engages itself with contemporary moves and policies and explores the human elements in political decisions.

In the novels of Nayantara Sahgal, the political theme of the attainment of freedom is linked with the women's search for freedom in the personal realm. In the same way, the search of values in the political arena is associated with a similar search on the personal plane of a synthesis between different codes of values. Freedom is an issue not only on the political crust of society but also in the subterranean springs of human life. As on the political plane, the attainment of freedom and the

diverse uses to which it is put forms the crux of the matter on the Personal plane.

The novels of Nayantara Sahgal asserts that writing comes more out of the world a writer inhabits than out of any literary tradition. It also draws attention to the way the line between the public and the private worlds seems to be disappearing and the way that people must face the traumatic consequences of public events in their private lives.

She brings politics and politicians down from the ivory towards rarefield ideology. She makes her public figures less of demigods or ogres and more of human beings whose actions and ideological platitudes make sense. Her work represents a fairly representative as well as authentic example of the transmutation of political consciousness into art through the medium of the imagination which integrates individual as well as social psychology and reflects its working in both personal and public action. In her novels we have the political and the human converging in an artistic amalgam and there by 'humanizes' politics.

Humanitarianism is much more than a mere 'undercurrent' in Nayantara Sahgal's fiction. She believes that no amount of material progress can be a substitute for the individual instinct to realize itself in a free environment according to its own potentialities. Creative potential cannot remain unaffected by the social and the political, for political awareness forms an integral part of the artists' consciousness as a human being.

In Sahgal's novels one sees a happy culmination of the most natnt gains achieved by her predecessors in the endeavour to coalesce the political and the personal in the realm of fiction. Enriched with the first- hand knowledge of India's politics, and intense personal experiences of divorce, and remarriage, Sahgal passionately devoted herself to writing. In all her works there is a juxtaposition of two worlds: the personal world of man-woman relationship and the impersonal world of politics. The artistic alchemy generates such intense heat that the ideas it appropriate are melted into human gestures and fused, with the emotions of its characters. Politics in her novel is integrated with the patterns of life traced and it functions as the germinal nucleus fermenting the human story.

The narrator, Sohanlal, Sanad (*from Happy*) present the constructive political ideology in an essentially human idiom. She presents her characters in life-like grey as blends of virtues and vices. She succeeds most in those characters where she penetrates deeply into their psychology to discover the instincts which proper them to action. Ms. Sahgal has used psychology to engraft her humanitarian concerns on an essentially political frame work. In *Happy*, Nootan's psychological motives for becoming what he does are explicitly laid bare. His public posture was a fulfillment of his inner craving "It had given him great satisfaction to cloak his movements with mystery and become something of a hero to his student following"(85). He felt bored with politics when could not attract the sort of publicity he wished to have in the post- Independence India. "He never could settle down to being an ordinary citizen in an

independent country” and “he tired to regain the thrills of his student days by becoming a communist (86). Even he became greatly depressed when even this failed to win him any sort of attention. He never forgave independent India for the oblivion to which it consigned him (86)

Sir Harilal Mathur’s anglo-mania on the Public front is shown as the direct consequence of an inferiority complex from which the Britishers had released him. He had felt fermented in India because he had been darker than his school fellows (155). This realization made Harilal a different man altogether. Now “he had in his heart an abiding gratitude to the British for giving him confidence in himself” (157).

In Nayantara Sahgal’s philosophy, the individual is the cornerstone. As far as the individual is concerned religion is the greatest motivating force for himself. An important component of Nayantara Sahgal’s political consciousness is the awareness of religion as the motivating force of action she reveals a rare insight into the psyche of the people when she focuses on their self-imposed fetters of faith she repeatedly finds her characters inhibited in acting decisively and responsibly in all walks of life, private or public. She relates this self-imposed helplessness to the inadequate creed that these people live by. In several ways religion affects human action. As the narrator in *Happy* explains, the central philosophy of karma itself can be seen as encouraging passivity if man’s present life is seen as the result of his past actions. “However, the doctrine can also be taken as a challenge for it is within human capability to shape a better future” (*Happy* 161)

Religion is a category which is problematic. All religions share a basic faith in human values and the primacy of moral life directed towards goodness. But in practice the stress on religious identity creates barriers, leads to intolerance, hatred and division and the closing-in of the mind. Religion is of significance because it spills over into cultural attitudes, groans our actions and marks our identity. Men act in accordance with their beliefs.

Hindus seem to be imbued with a paralysing fatalism which makes them complacent, unambitious and inactive. Govind Narayan in *Happy*, “clung... tenaciously to his comforts” (15) justifying it with his Smug conviction that he had “accumulated merit in my previous incarnations.... or I should not have been born into the pleasant life I now enjoy. I should be a bad Hindu if I did not live as my birth and position intended me to do” (15). This fatalism breeds inaction and aversion to do anything which might disturb the applicant of one’s comforts. Govind Narayan brushed aside the incident of the discrimination against his daughter with the comment, “What are five thousand years of culture if they have not taught one to be polite?” (56). The same refusal to be provoked even by the greatest of events is to be seen in Savitri Sahai in the same novel, who manages to find some vague pride in the India. She said.

They have taken our land, Our roads are named after their people. The greenest grass is reserved for them and the most rewarding jobs. But they have nor penetrated the inner sanctum,

the real temple that is India. In that they have no interest, for it does not profit them. The realm of spirit continues inviolate soaring above the crushed hopes and the unborn dreams. That still belongs to Bharat Mata alone, and no one can deprive her of it. (184)

Nayantara Sahgal’s protagonists invariably use a Gandhain idiom in espousing their humanitarian. commitment. Sohan Bhai, depicted in *Happy*, not only has been influenced by the Mahatma, but he is directly suggestive of Gandhi with his crusading zeal for wiping the tears from others’ eyes “Then there is a feeling within you, after all, and even it you are interested only in yourself, then you are interested in a fragment of humanity and the way is open for you to reach all human creatures’ (86)

All her positive heroes are either well-integrated with the masses already or they arrive at the stage of such integration in due course. *Happy* admittedly delineates the relationship in the idealistic vein. Sohanlal, the idealized Gandhain in *Happy* takes to politics as a mission. He has no other identity, no marks of distinction from the masses. The narrator and Maya in the same novel turn their backs on power and money to lead a life of dedication and service to the masses. Sanad, too, towards the end of the novel decides to efface his anglicized background and strive towards greater involvement with the people.

The Gandhian perception of the individual as the carrier of the divine spark within him and consequently being the measure of all things has a significant dimension in the novels of Nayantara Sahgal. The individual in even the supposedly irredeemable sinners is given a humane consideration by her. Even the negative characters in her novels are presented in a sympathetic light, focussing on the sin rather than on the sinner concerned, who is generally the inevitable product of a set of circumstances such a presentation not merely humanize their villainy, it also engages one’s attention to the rot which is to be stemmed rather than the individual who has got infected.

The villains in the fictional universe of Nayantara Sahgal are generally professional politician. However, such public figures in her novels are portrayed less of ogres fired by motiveless malignity they appear as human beings whose actions and ideological platitudes make sense. Their public posters are presented as the external manifestation of internal compulsions and in doing so Sahgal succeeds in humanizing the demonical contours of most of her villains or negative heroes. In *happy* public posture of a revolutionary is depicted as a means to gratify his inner caring for fame.

The Political theme of the attainment of freedom is linked with the women’s search for freedom in the personal realm. Nayantara Sahgal is deeply concerned with the need for freedom, for women to become aware of themselves as individuals. Society has normally denied them this freedom. The emancipation of women has been a very painful and slow process as they have had to overcome not only social opinion and orthodoxy but also personal hesitation and reluctance. Self awareness is a two-way process requiring not only the social

circumstances conducive to it but also the sensitivity and fineness of individual sensibility. Nayantara Sahgal does not view her women characters as wage-earners or career women but mainly as married women-as wives, daughters, and to become aware of themselves as individuals and to be accepted as equals.

The worth of Nayantara Sahgal's achievement lies in her attempt to portray the politicians in personal relationships rather than giving them the usual hue of the political aspirations of non-political entities or the shenanigans of those in power. Her politicians exist in both the public and the private realms and feel on their pulse, at times, the tragic implications of such duality. The implication of such a situation is presented through the narrator in Happy.

The narrator in Happy is not as simple a character as he is made to appear. Throughout the novel, we feel him disclosing the duality in his mind-duality between the instincts of enjoyment and abstinence, affirmation and denial. He might claim it to be "Sanad's story" (6) Nevertheless it reveals much about the narrator also. His rationalization about his giving up smoking and remaining unmarried is discernible a note of wistfulness and longing. Time and again we find him either referring longingly to the other realm Or actually losing himself in that world attest for a short time.

The narrator, in moments of confessional urgency does come out with his problem. "I could not come to terms with myself" (68) The reader is left wondering regarding the "realization of another sort (60) which the narrator is waiting for and which he repeatedly uses as an excuse to deny himself what a part of him craves for. In his potentially schizophrenic personality he is actually telling himself most of the time what he seems to tell others. This contrariness in the private and the public longings of an individual remains only on the implied level and is not made use of as an integral part of the design.

However, the connections between the personal and political seem rather forced, lacking in inevitability and interdependence. The reinterpretation of the Hindu ethos fails to coalesce with the other strands. The book is so loosely constructed that it resembles a memoir. The only redeeming feature of the book as a political novel as its success in coalescing the public and the private concerns of some of its character through a convening study of the intricate psychology of human action and behavior. In the portraits of Harilal Mathur, Nootan and Kunti Behn, such a success is easily discernible.

The reading of *Rich Like Us* opens up the novel through two types of discourses - one post colonial and the other feminist. While the post colonial discourse of the political novel foregrounds a nation's cultural and historical past, liberating itself from Eurocentric perspectives and confronting its present social and political realities feminist discourse dissenters patriarchal power structures, writing in a women's body, perspectives, struggle and value. Both discourses reject manipulative power structures and speak for a renewal of human relationships based on reason, equality and love.

The use of post colonial and feminist discourses serves to demonstrate how the ideological components of this text are represented at the levels of narrative with an emphasis on multiple voices and stylistically, the privileging of selected structural motifs and patterns. Both discourses advocate the expression of the subjectivity of the "Self" standing opposition to the autocracy of the "the other" Both discourses again post a liberating movement out of inarticulation into speech, through interrogation of stereotypes, roles and conditioning. Violence upon the body and suspension of legal processes and civic rights, claiming victims, connect both discourses. Working through the problems of the states of post coloniality and female, Sahgal offers resolutions springing from a true humanitarian discourse resulting in positive action.

In the opening chapter of *Rich Like Us*, Sahgal creates a focus around the shambling bureaucracies of post colonial nations, in this case India. The host Dev is justifying to the foreign business contact Neuman, the declaration of emergency in India (26th June 1975) which has also paved the way for ventures such as the opening of a new factory, ostensibly for the production of a fizzy drink Happyola. The omniscient narrative voice dissociates itself from Dev, allowing the critical nonsense voice of Rose, cockney wife of Ram to dominate. Rose rejects the primacy of money - compensation which will be paid to the villagers whose homes will be uprooted when the factory comes up. The discourse polarises around the new business ethic which gains support from blind supporters of the Emergency like Dev and the Joint Secretary, Ministry for Industry, Ravi Kachru, who is the perfect liaison man.

The perils of a post coloniality which has bartered away its newly won freedom, placing itself for sale in a context of relations where money, gold and riches are prime values are sounded out in the very first chapter. Neuman is a believer in only the financial basis of his happiness. Significantly he has discarded his interest in history and archeology, arriving at a formulaic approach to work and relationships, shunning the reality of the crippled, deformed beggar without arms, whom he spots as he leaves Dev's house after the business deal. The beggar is the other' whom he nullifies, satisfied only when he has been able to appropriate the Indian in a Eurocentric discourse of "riches". Neuman accepts unquestioningly, the truth of his briefing before leaving for India - "If they had do like we do, they'd be *Rich Like Us*" (16).

Sahgal explores the theme of decline, deterioration and disorder in the post - independence scenario of former colonies through narrative consciousness of Sonali, ICS officer, recently transferred and humiliated because of her fidelity to truth and standards of work. She opposes the dehumanizing values of the Emergency, the sycophancy before Madam, and the culture of money which informs politics and erodes the bureaucracy. Sonali is disillusioned by the current state of affairs.

"The emergency has given all kinds of new twists and turns to policy and the world's largest democracy was looking like nothing so much as one of the two-bit dictatorship we had loftily looked down upon. The things that had set us apart were



not clever to me anymore” (31)

*Rich Like Us* takes up the issue of human character and colonialism in the context of ‘Sati’. Courage, honesty and integrity are the qualities which build a nation. The same impulse for power which characterizes the ruthlessness of the Emergency also characterises social relationships. And the same passivity which accepts that atrocity is also responsible for the submission to imperial control. Surprised by her own removal from her post, Sonali feels humiliated and turns to her father’s memory who has recently died, for emotional sustenance. As she goes through his papers, she finds a manuscript written by her grandfather in 1915 and some news paper cuttings of 1829 related to the sati law. These materials lead her not only to trace her family history but also the history of people. The manuscript provides an account of Sonali’s grand- mother’s forced performance of Sati. The discourse of the manuscript examines the complexity of Hinduism, the status of Hindu woman as wife and widow and the patronizing attitude of British policy which its administrators implement. The dead weight of stagnant ideas seems to be a negation of real Hinduism, rendering Hinduism to be merely “a religion cooking posts” (120) as Sonali in *Rich* puts it. It is this intrinsic opiate in Popular Hinduism which makes all sensitive beings in Nayantara Sahgal’s fictional universe feel stifled. Keshav and Sonali have no option but to seek shelter out of the fold, so much does the faith suffocate them.

The atrocity of Sati is re enacted when Dev, Rose’s stepson, subjects her to a twentieth century version of sati by getting her out of the way by having her killed. Civilization, it appears, has either not progressed or has progressed only in matter of brutality, the implication is also that we need to shoulder greater responsibility for our own debased values rather than blame them on colonialism. Even a legitimate fight for freedom can deteriorate into brutality if it violates the ethical code of human life.

A keen observation of the position of woman in our patriarchal society brings to the fore, the pathetic condition of their being. Woman who has been compared to the creator, woman who has been defied, woman who has been at the centre of all human existence has sadly and surreptitiously been robbed of her own identity. In her role as a daughter she has felt privileged, but while trying to give perfect performance in these roles somewhere down the line she has forgotten her own self. Man has used her, exploited her, taken her support to climb the ladder of success but at the end of it all discarded her shamelessly. If woman gives in to the demands of her man it is because she loves him and is emotionally attached to him. But if love teaches surrender, it also teaches defiance. Though submissive - not by nature but by training- women tend to become defiant when their patience is taxed for too long. When women’s crusade for emancipation begins it sweeps away all that comes in the way.

Women are born as free as men, but they are not allowed to remain free for long. In fact feminists assert that women are made by society. It is a person that takes birth but society with its snarled up views of virtue and morals make women out of

them. In fact this is one of the ills of patriarchal society.

Nayantara Sahgal’s novels show her deep concern for the emancipation of women; she wants them to become aware of their existence as individuals. Though most of her women are portrayed as wives, mothers and daughters, her reviews regarding feminism find illustration through these domesticated characters. A professed feminist Nayantara Sahgal’s journey as a woman writer starts from the search for selfhood and reaches its culmination in the attainment of it. She has a humanitarian dislike of suffering and inequality.

Sahgal’s novel *Rich Like Us* has her first woman who is a foreigner and it also has her second and last career woman Sonali. The imposition of emergency in 1975 has been used as the backdrop emergency itself spells the adjournment of all freedom and consequently whets the appetite for the same. The story is presented through the conscience of two women- Sonali and Rose. These two are Sahgal’s specimen of new woman though each in a different way.

Sonali is a fine Indian specimen of the new woman. She grows up with a dream to fulfil, “a new tradition to create our own independent worth to prove” (28). She has grown up in a world which fostered idealism. Sonali’s interrogation of her country’s past, precipitated by the crisis of the emergency, leads to an initial act of negation where she disowns the idealism she has been endowed in her father’s tradition, an idealism which celebrates the fact that Indians “were moderate, tolerant people steeped in civilized ways” (35)

Sonali senses that there is an attempt to crush her. Right from her childhood she had been a champion of emancipation.

Unlike her sister Kiran who has opted for a safe and complacent marriage to Neel, Sonali takes pleasure in being different and therefore herself.

Sonali shares her emotional conflicts with Rose, turning to her for womanly sympathy and support and clarity of advice. Both women scorn materialism, keeping alive channels of honest communication and concern for the suffering and downtrodden. Rose hands over her legacy - humanitarian and optimistic to Sonali, making non-existent the cultural divide. But Sonali’s struggle for self-determination is somewhat different from that of other women. In the sense that she is facing destructive forces outside of her home. Rose - a close friend of Sonali- is facing this problem at home front. Rose the foreigner is as much a picture of victimization as is Sonali the Indian. The crumbling burden of society and custom crushes the personality of all women- Indian or western. Rose, who appears to be quite emancipated, is not really so and this becomes clear in her interaction with Ram, as well as with Dev, her stepson.

Because of its political hegemony as the theory of human rights, and perhaps also because we have, over centuries and across continents, confused it with the workings of human consciousness itself, the ideology of individualism is a hard nut to crack. Individualism is based on the ideal that all people are

born individuals and therefore entitled to certain fundamental rights as individuals. Freedom to speak one's mind, to choose one's profession or religion, to conduct one's private life without fear of state intervention and so on. For all its appeal to universal ideas about humanity, individualism has been a very special and exclusive class. Those women who have managed to acquire individualist status in the late twentieth century have generally come from same class as the men for whom individual rights have historically been possible. Indeed, one of the principal thematic thrusts of the novel seems to be Sonali's growing comprehension that the ideals on which she had been tenderly raised- that in free India all people are equal, have fundamental human rights, and all have access to an unbiased justice system that will ensure those rights- have little basis in the reality of 1970's India.)

We have some insight into the power structure in India when Sonali, remembering her university days with Ravi at Oxford, identifies the dominant elite as the "tiny wee handful whose uncles and aunts all know each other and who are in charge of everything without a notion what everything really is" (101). Understanding through personal experience the "simplest subjugations" (101) of womanhood, she also resists doctrines such as Ravi's Marxism, that require the subordination of large groups of people to the ideas of the powerful that posit someone with the right answers.

Sonali does not recognise herself in the they 'them' she does not concede that, belonging to the class that must suspend the constitutionally guaranteed rights of non-elite others to maintain its controlling position, she is in compliance with the structures of dominance. Sonali does not ultimately unlearn her privilege such an unlearning cannot take place within a liberal paradigm, however, for it would require Sonali to question whether the beggar was indeed on individual with an individual's rights in the first place or if her liberal ideas had always worked to individualise - and thus accord rights to only the wee thing handful of her people in charge. The pledge of her liberal nationalism to provide liberty and equality for all is bogus, for liberty and equality are incompatible when the equality of the disenfranchised jeopardises the liberty of enfranchised individuals to freely exercise their rights.

Rich obviously has politics not fully subsumed in art. While politics can certainly form a legitimate subject-matter of art, it should be fully integrated with the human narrative. Sahgal had succeed in legitimizing her indictment of the pseudo- radicalism and the dictatorial propensities in the post independence set of leaders in her novels because it sprung in human terms. *Rich Like Us* offers no easy solutions to man kind's problems, on the contrary it challenges all known solutions. It projects a picture of the repetitive nature of revolutions. It does however speak for the human consciousness - as distinct from character -and for human courage as different from bravery. *Rich Like Us* is about the complex nature of reality. Rich highlights the issues unscrupulous greed, rampant corruption and heartless misuse of authority - which are afflicting nation, as well as the individual people like Sonali, Rose and others.

## CONCLUSION

After having analyzed Nayantara Sahgal's novels - *A Time to be Happy and Rich Like Us* we may safely reach the conclusion that in her novels the political and the human converges into a unity and thereby the political novel comes to maturity and fruition. Almost all her novels have one character or the other who fights for the sake of humanitarian values, and even though he may be outrun by the pace of developments, atleast a trial is blazed following which a fight Can be waged.

The individual is the most important factor in Nayantara Sahgal's thinking. The individual is the criterion with which she judges all issues in politics and religion, Sociology and ethics. She is unsparing in her scathing expose of degeneration of ideals in politics where the individual becomes just a pawn in a game with bigger stakes. Nayantara Sahgal's portrayal of the political scene is marked by the clarity with which she differentiates one breed of persons from the other and classifies them accordingly. All political or personal goals in Nayantara Sahgal's Gandhian vision have the individual as the point of reference.

The individual is the corner-stone of Nayantara Sahgal's philosophy and religion is the greatest motivating force for the individual.

The close connection between the personal and the public world is manifested time and again. It is impossible to keep the two apart. There can be no clinical approach to the reality which surrounds us.

Nayantara Sahgal shows signs of gradual maturity as a political novelist expertly interlocking her humanitarian and political concerns into a harmony where each realm adds to the other and the solutions to the problems in one or often to be found in the other. The novelist has succeeded in linking the personal and the political not only by showing the same forces at work in the two realms but also by presenting the political as the extension of the personal.

A close study of Nayantara Sahgal's novels manifests that she succeeds in her commitment of the humanization of political rhetoric. She has used such tools as religion, Gandhism, man-woman relationship, feminist discourse and psychology to engraft her humanitarian concerns on an essentially political frame work.

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